

Schools and districts that are really moving forward in foreign language education . . .

1. Setting proficiency targets
2. Designing instructional pathways to reach those targets
3. Testing (internally and externally) to see if they are hitting them

Government (FSI) Scale	Academic (ACTFL/ETS) Scale	Definition
5	Native	Able to speak like an educated native speaker
4+ 4 3+ 3	Superior	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations
2+	Advanced Plus	Able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics
2	Advanced	Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements
1+	Intermediate-High	Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands
1	Intermediate-Mid	Able to satisfy some survival needs and some limited social demands
	Intermediate-Low	Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements
0+	Novice-High	Able to satisfy needs with learned utterances
0	Novice-Mid	Able to operate in only a very limited capacity
	Novice-Low	Unable to function in the spoken language No ability whatsoever in the language

Source: Judith E. Liskin-Gasparro. *ETS Oral Proficiency Testing Manual*. Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1982.

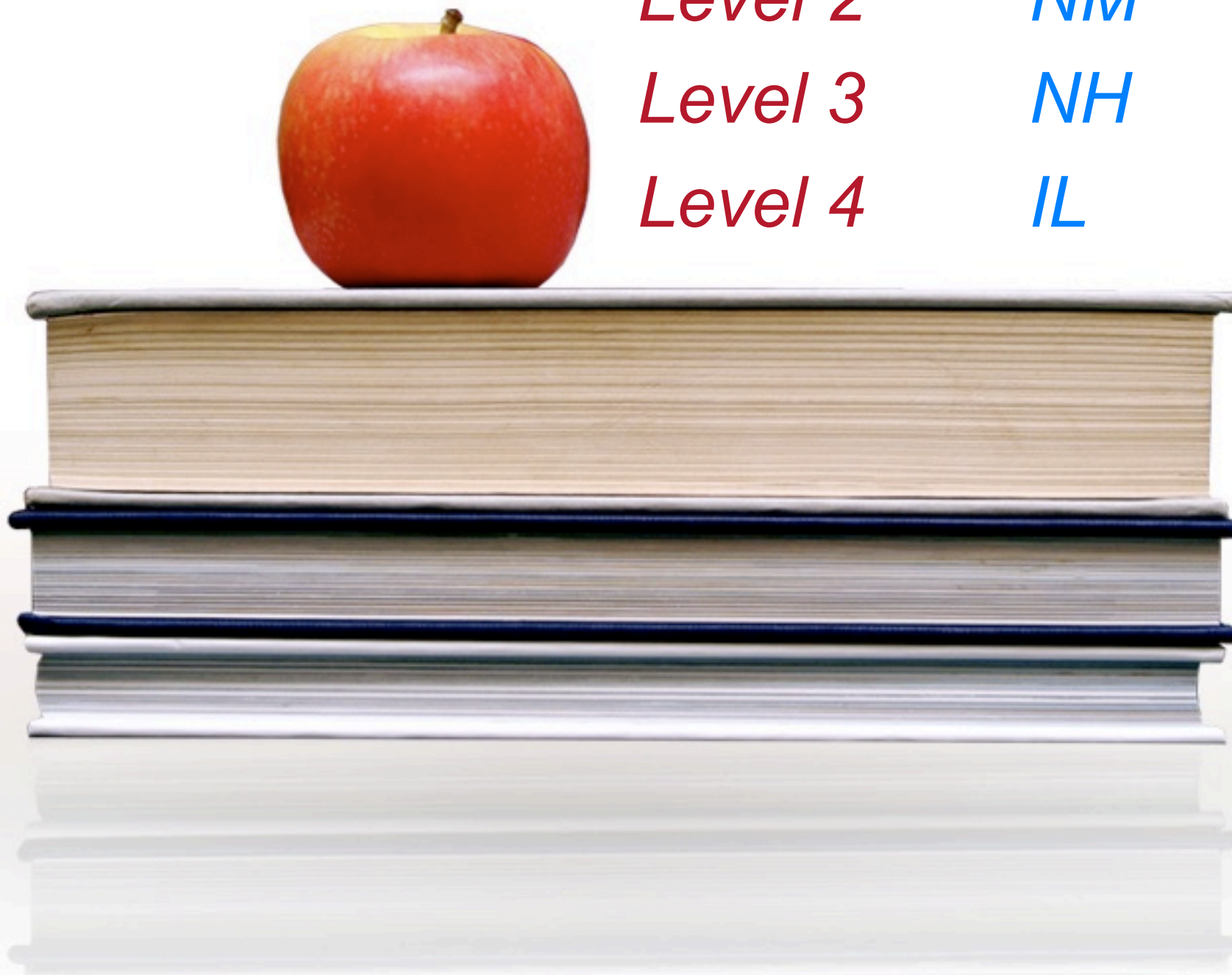
What we are getting in proficiency from secondary and college students after . . .

	<i>old data *</i> (N=7500, ca. 1999)	<i>new data *</i> (N=22,000, 2008)
<i>Level 1 ?</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>NH</i>
<i>Level 2 ?</i>	<i>NM</i>	<i>NH</i>
<i>Level 3 ?</i>	<i>NH</i>	<i>NH</i>
<i>Level 4 ?</i>	<i>IL</i>	<i>NH / IL</i>



** data gathered by
using the
STAMP Test
www.avantassessment.com*

What can we expect in proficiency from students after . . .



	<i>old data *</i> (N=7500, ca. 1999)	<i>new data *</i> (N=22,000, 2008)	<i>possible target</i>
<i>Level 1</i>	<i>NL-NM</i>	<i>NH</i>	<i>NH</i>
<i>Level 2</i>	<i>NM</i>	<i>NH</i>	<i>IL</i>
<i>Level 3</i>	<i>NH</i>	<i>NH</i>	<i>IM</i>
<i>Level 4</i>	<i>IL</i>	<i>IL</i>	<i>IM</i>

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Novice Speakers ?



www.123cartoon.com

What was Leonor's speech
like?

Novice Speakers

- Respond to simple questions on the most common features of daily life
- Convey minimal meaning to interlocutors experienced at dealing with foreigners by using
 - isolated words
 - lists of words
 - memorized phrases
 - some personalized recombinations of words or phrases
- Satisfy only a very limited number of immediate needs

How accurate are Novice Speakers?

- Intelligibility
- Contextually appropriate responses



I used to go with my phrase book to small towns in Japan. People would be on the ground laughing so hard, because God knows what I was saying. They knew what I was *trying* to say, obviously. “Where is such and such a temple,” or whatever. But the pronunciation was all wrong, and I was probably saying, you know, “The fishmonger is an idiot and ought to be hanged” or something.

Lorin Maazel, former Music Director, New York Philharmonic
The New Yorker , March 3, 2008

FAMILY CIRCUS

by Bil Keane



12-15

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www.familycircus.com

**"It's called a scream door 'cause
that's where they scream at us
to come in for dinner."**

Intermediate Speakers ?



**What did you hear as *Guadalupe*
spoke?**

Intermediate Speakers

mostly in present time . . .

- participate in simple, direct conversations, generally led by someone more proficiency than they
- ask and answer questions
- handle basic, uncomplicated situations encountered in daily living (survival language)
- create with the language to express their own thoughts in their own words
- use discrete sentences and strings of sentences; can begin to use sentence “connectors”[#]

How Accurate are Intermediate Speakers?



- Do better with interlocutors who are accustomed to non-native speakers of the language (more patient);
- Speak mostly in present tense but can sprinkle in past and future;
- Pronunciation, stress patterns, and grammar may all be flawed but there is sufficient accuracy for communication at the sentence level.

What does an Advanced speaker look like?



Advanced speakers . . .

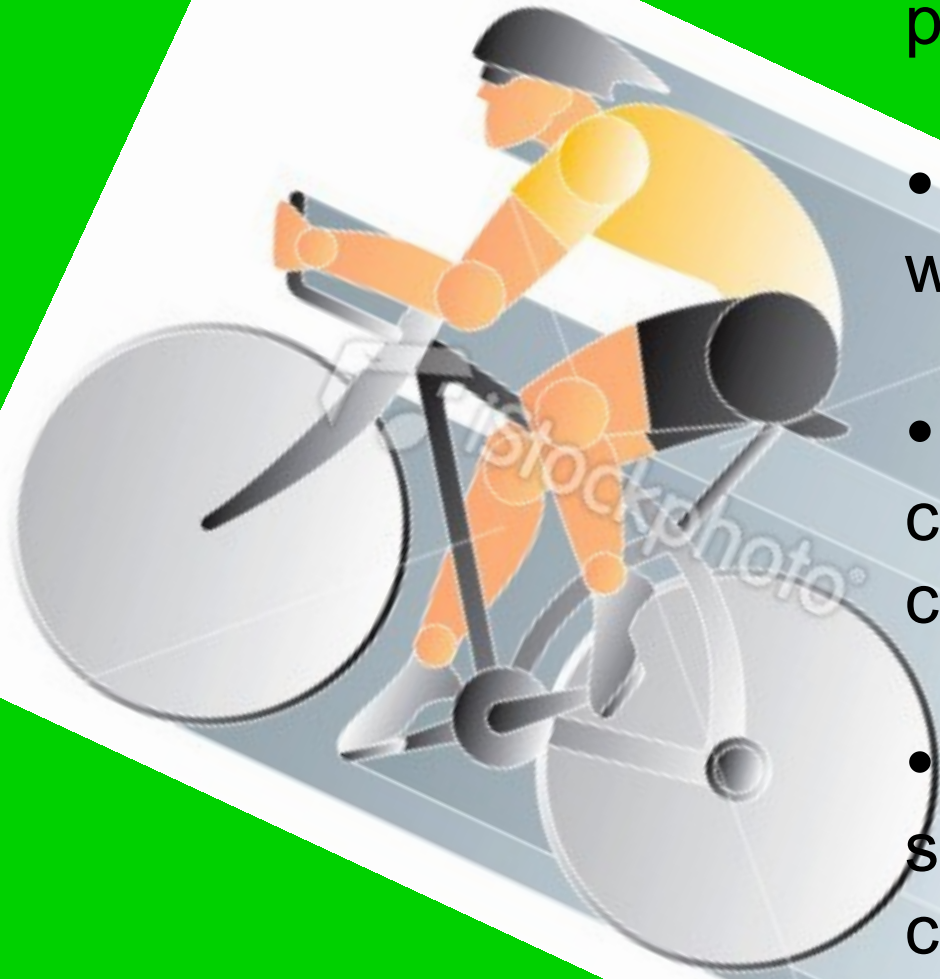
- participate actively in conversations in most formal and informal settings on concrete and factual topics of personal and public interest;

- narrate and describe in major time frames with good control;

- deal effectively with unanticipated complications through a variety of communicative devices;

- sustain communication by using, with suitable accuracy and confidence, connected discourse of paragraph length and substance;

- satisfy the demands of work and/or school situations.



Superior speakers ?



Superior speakers . . .

- can fundamentally do anything in their second language that they can do in their first language;
- speak in detail, hypothesize, handle unfamiliar topics and situations;
- evidence excellent control of grammar in every aspect except possible idiomatic usage;
- can produce linguistic subtlety and nuance.





Novice



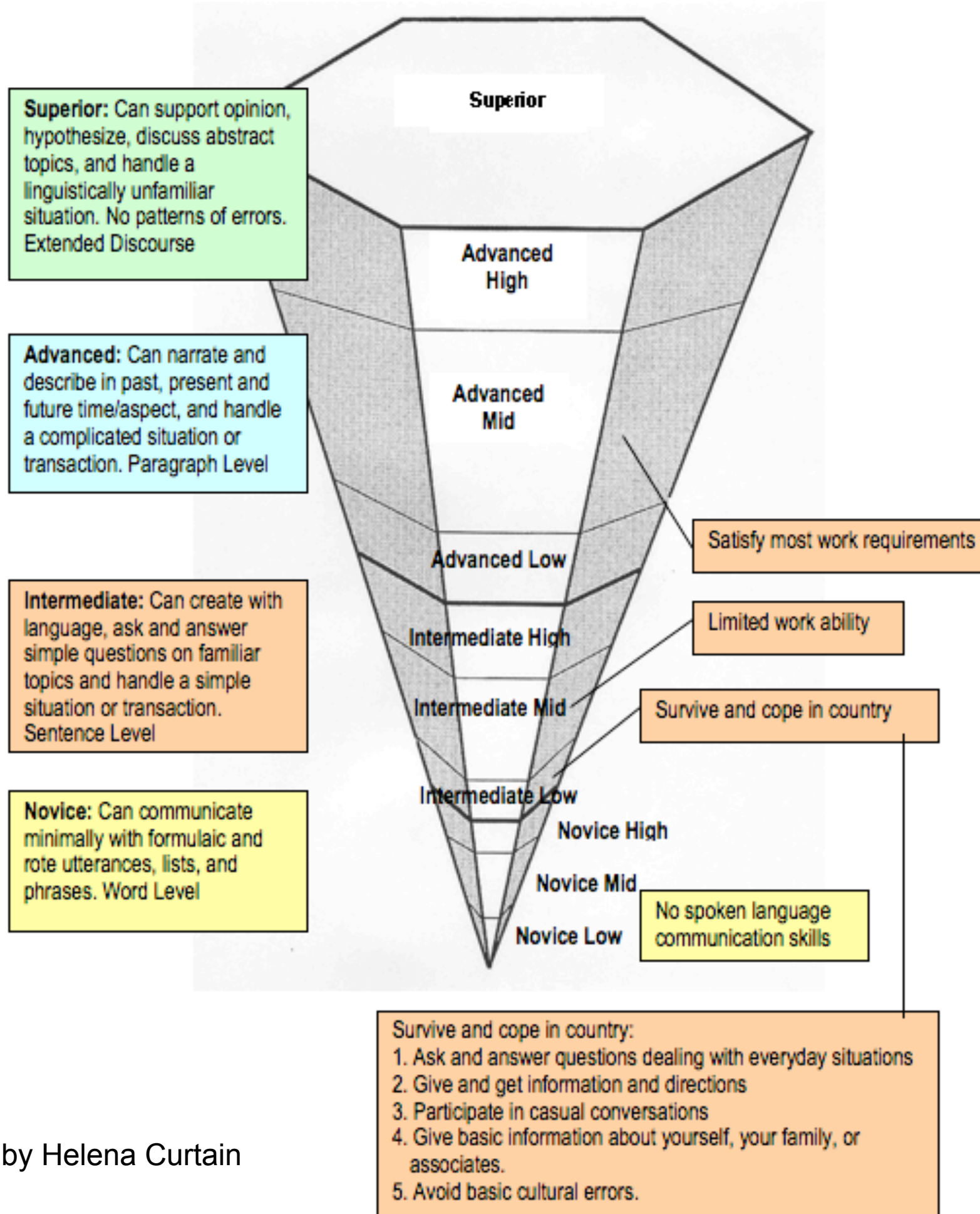
Intermediate



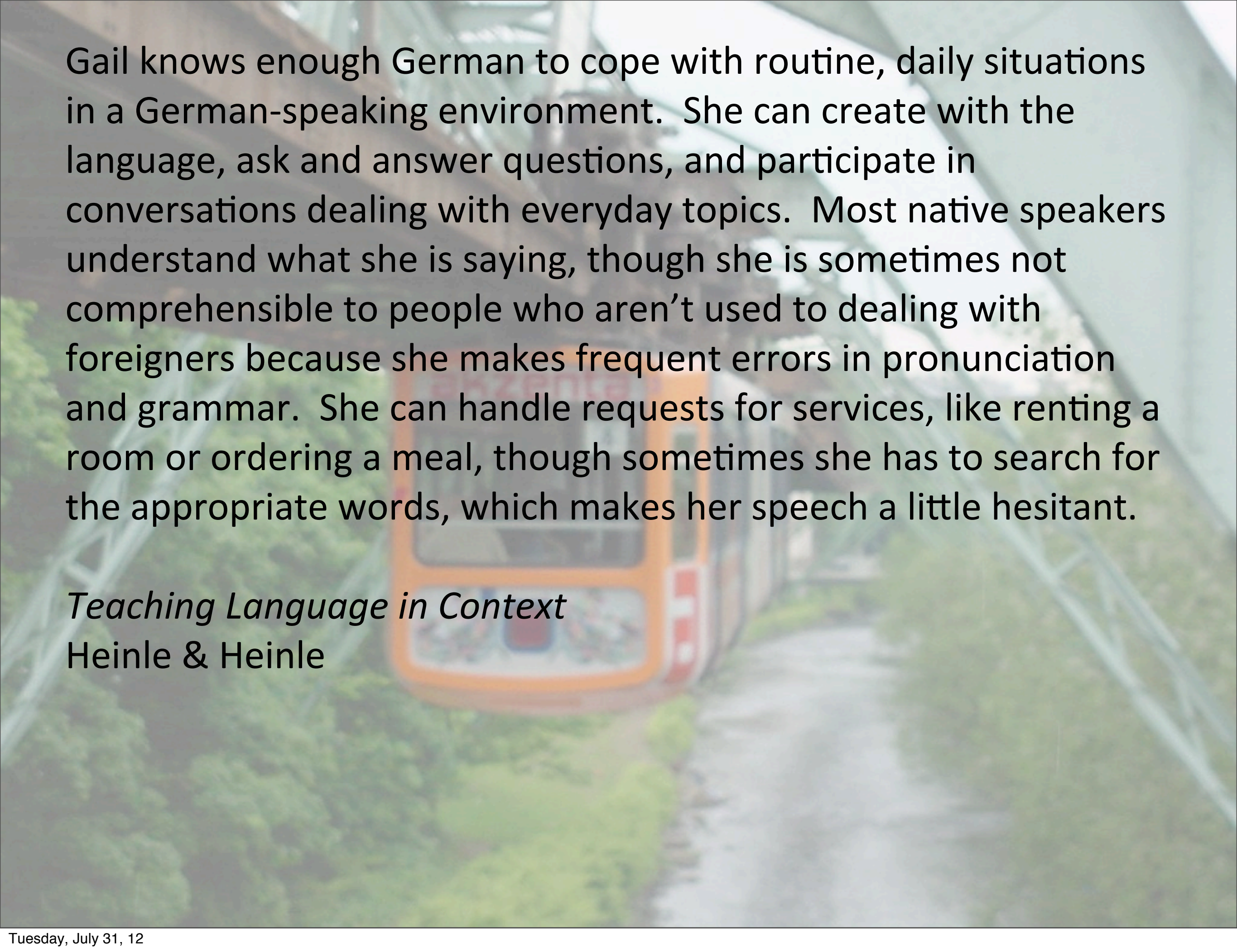
Advanced



Superior




Adapted by Helena Curtain



Gail knows enough German to cope with routine, daily situations in a German-speaking environment. She can create with the language, ask and answer questions, and participate in conversations dealing with everyday topics. Most native speakers understand what she is saying, though she is sometimes not comprehensible to people who aren't used to dealing with foreigners because she makes frequent errors in pronunciation and grammar. She can handle requests for services, like renting a room or ordering a meal, though sometimes she has to search for the appropriate words, which makes her speech a little hesitant.

Teaching Language in Context

Heinle & Heinle



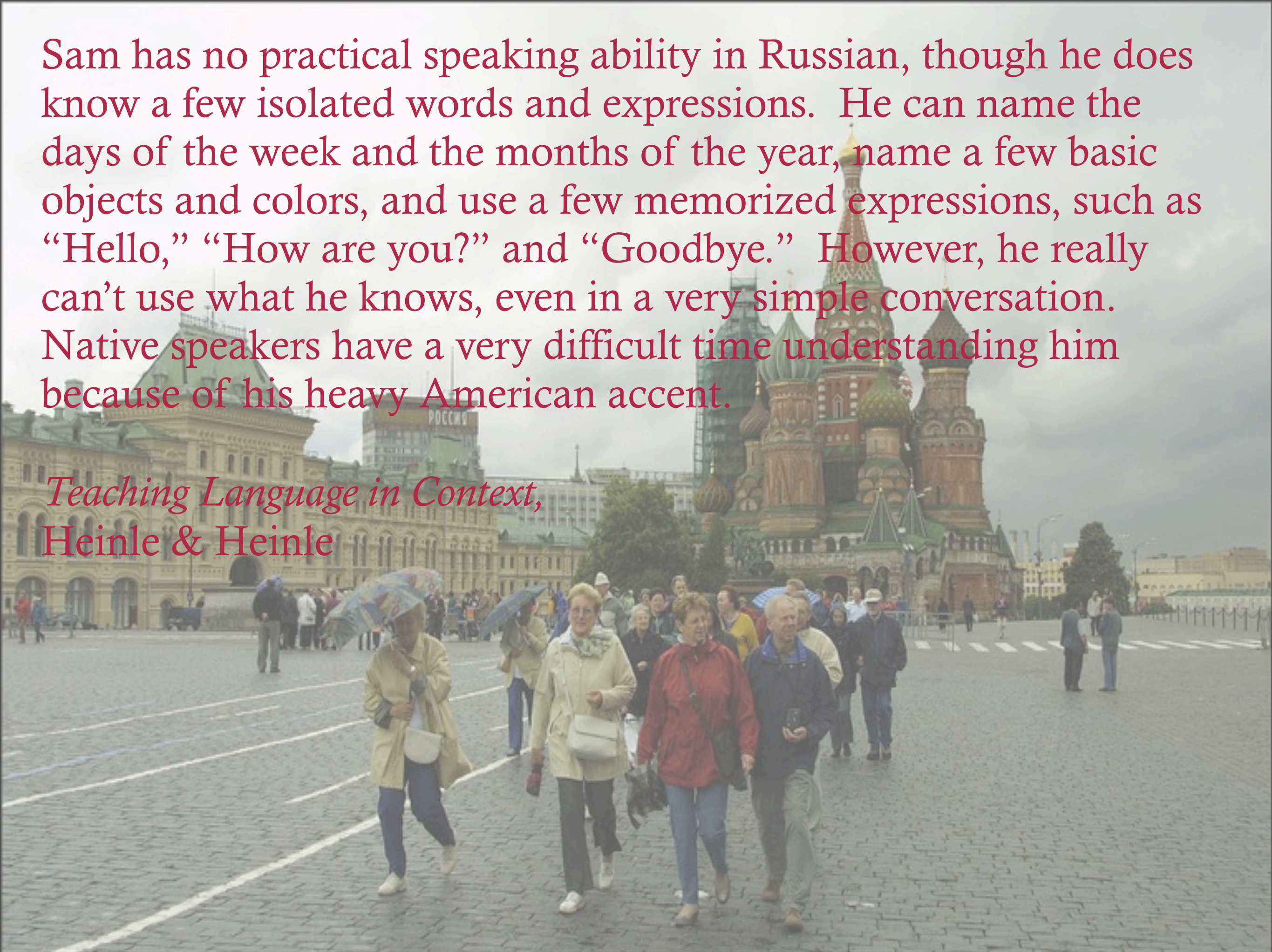
Mary Anne speaks Chinese well enough to participate fully in casual conversations, especially when the discussion relates to topics such as her family, her work as a missionary, her travel experiences, and current events. She does have some difficulty expressing her point of view in Chinese, and her language tends to break down when the discussion gets too complex. Sometimes she miscommunicates, but most native speakers, including those who have never dealt with Americans, can understand her meaning. In her work in the mission field, which includes social ministry, Mary Anne is good at giving instructions, explaining and describing various health-related procedures, and talking with people about her past travels and her aspirations for the future.

Teaching Language in Context
Heinle & Heinle

Habeeb Salloum

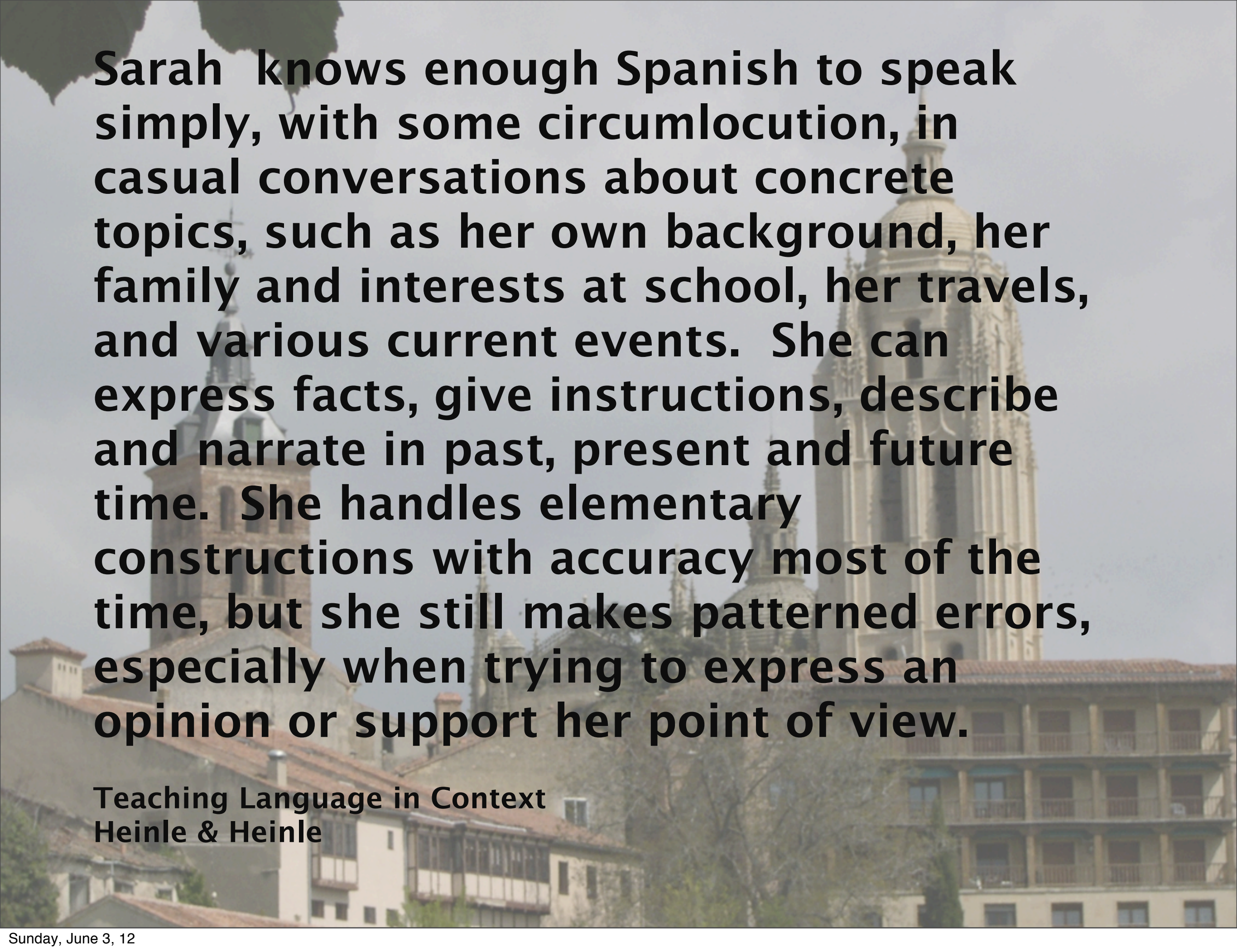
Sam has no practical speaking ability in Russian, though he does know a few isolated words and expressions. He can name the days of the week and the months of the year, name a few basic objects and colors, and use a few memorized expressions, such as “Hello,” “How are you?” and “Goodbye.” However, he really can’t use what he knows, even in a very simple conversation. Native speakers have a very difficult time understanding him because of his heavy American accent.

Teaching Language in Context,
Heinle & Heinle



Bill can converse in both formal and informal situations, resolve problems, deal with unfamiliar topics, describe in detail, and offer supported opinion in his second language, French. He is quite adept at talking about his special field of competence—political science—and is generally able to handle any topic of discussion he can handle in English. He has a slight accent and occasionally makes errors, but they never interfere with communication or disturb native speakers.

Teaching Language in Context
Heinle & Heinle

The background of the slide is a faded, grayscale image of a cityscape. A prominent feature is a large, ornate cathedral dome with a spire, likely the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. Other buildings and trees are visible in the foreground and midground, creating a layered urban scene.

Sarah knows enough Spanish to speak simply, with some circumlocution, in casual conversations about concrete topics, such as her own background, her family and interests at school, her travels, and various current events. She can express facts, give instructions, describe and narrate in past, present and future time. She handles elementary constructions with accuracy most of the time, but she still makes patterned errors, especially when trying to express an opinion or support her point of view.

**Teaching Language in Context
Heinle & Heinle**

Pausing to Reflect



How will what I have learned this morning make me a more effective world language teacher?